A SERMON

Preached in the

Cathedral Church OF ROCHESTER,

On the 29th. of *May*, 1684.

BEING

The Anniverſary of His Moſt Sacred Majeſty's Birth, and happy Reſtauration to theſe his undoubted Realms and Dominions.

By *JOHN CLERKE*;

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Publiſhed at the Requeſt of that Corporation.

Cæſaris *alma dies*———
Longa precor, Pylioq; *veni numeroſior ævo*,
Semper & hoc vultu, vel meliore nite.
Mart. Lib. 4. Ep. 1.

LONDON,
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To the Right Worſhipful, the MAYOR, RECORDER, ALDERMEN, and COMMON COUNCIL of the City of *ROCHESTER.*

Worthy Sirs,

FIrſt in your Cathedral Church *to have recommended, and afterwards, in a more ſolemn manner, to have dedicated a* Perſuaſive *to a chearful* Obedience *to thoſe lawful* Governors, whom God alone *has thought fit to place over you of that ſo* Ancient *and truly* Loyal City; *may ſeem, upon a tranſient View, to argue the Preacher and Publiſher of ſuch a Diſcourſe, to have been ſo far tranſported, by a too* fervent Zeal *for the defence of his*

moſt juſt Cauſe; *as to have overlooked his* LORD *and* MASTER'S
Mar. 2. 17. *Obſervation: namely, that,* They that are whole have no need of the Phyſitian, but they that are ſick. *And therefore a brief* Treatiſe *on ſuch a* Point *as this, had been much more properly delivered in the* Pulpit, *much more ſeaſonably preſented from the* Preſs, *to ſome other* Corporation; *which has, peradventure, of late been afraid to do that which is* Evil *againſt their Supreme* Magiſtrate; *only becauſe they have happily found him not to have* borne the Sword *of Juſtice* in vain.

But ſince that Remark *of our* Bleſſed Saviour *does in no wiſe dehort from following the Son of* Si-
Eccluſ. 18. 19. rach's *wholſome Advice*; viz. to uſe Phyſick or ever we be ſick: *to meet even*

even the remoteſt Symptomes of thoſe more ſlowly approaching Diſeaſes, which tend to the diſſolution of thoſe earthly Houſes, our Souls at preſent inhabit. Let therefore what hath been ſaid upon this Subject, be interpreted according to the true meaning thereof: i. e. *Not ſo much for a* Confirmation, *as a happy* Continuation; *but chiefly for a deſerved* Commendation *of your firm, unſhaken* Allegiance *to the* Crown; *and of your Exemplary* Obedience *to the* Church, as now by Law eſtabliſhed. *And that too at ſuch a time, when ſo many of your* Siſter-Societies *did but too plainly demonſtrate; That the true* Faith, *they ought then to have born to their* Soveraign, *his lawful* Heirs *and* Succeſſors, *was only ſupported by the eaſily* yielding Ground:

Ground; *and built upon that moſt deceitful* Sandy Foundation *of a* miſtaken Intereſt.

Wherefore, may the deſign of this Eſſay be underſtood to be (what really it is) a ſincere, hearty, though weak Endeavour; That You, *who now* ſtand *ſo ſecure, may* take heed leſt *hereafter* you fall. *That* You, Jer. 2. 21. *who are now* planted a noble Vine, wholly a right Seed, *may not in time to come* be turned into the degenerate Plant of a ſtrange Vine. *So prayeth,*

Your Servant for *Jeſus ſake,*

John Clerke.

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1 Cor.

1 Cor. 10. 10.

Neither murmur ye, as ſome of them alſo murmured, and were deſtroyed of the deſtroyer.

THis Chapter contains a Catalogue of thoſe numerous tranſgreſſions, which the Children of *Iſrael* were found guilty of before the Lord their God.

In which account, my Text brings in that Cardinal Sin of *murmuring* againſt their Rulers, of repining againſt Gods heavenly Diſpenſations, in governing all the Nations upon Earth, according to his Divine Will and Pleaſure. For the Words have a particular reference to *Korah*, and his rebellious Accomplices; who inſolently accuſed the man *Moſes*, a Perſon of eminent *meekneſs*, even *above all the men which were upon the face of the Earth*; for haughtily aſpiring to make himſelf *altogether a Prince over them* in Temporal matters: and for conſtituting his Brother *Aaron* High Prieſt, and ſo conſequently making him Chief in all Spiritual affairs. Num. 12. 3. Num. 16. 13.

Whereupon the diſaffected Party gather themſelves together in Tumults; and tell theſe two

Josephus lib. contr. Appion. Pillars, Upholders of the most immediate *Theocracy* ever known on this side Heaven, plainly to their faces; That in truth, *they took too much upon them, seeing all the Congregation were holy every one of them, and the Lord was* alike *among them.* Whence they proceeded to demand that uncivil question, *Wherefore then* did these two Brethren arrogantly *lift up themselves above the Congregation of the Lord?*

Num. 16. 3.

Thus do we find, that in all Ages before and from the *Jewish* times, even down to our own later unhappy dayes of utter confusion and ineffable misery, the Trumpet never yet sounded an Alarm for battle; but the goodly pretences, the specious pleas made use of to excite the unthinking Multitude, to animate the ignorant Rabble (which, like those *sixscore thousand persons* of *Nineveh, cannot discern between their right hand and their left*) evermore were, and evermore will be those false suggestions, that their Rulers take away from them their Property and Liberty, their Religion and freedom of Conscience.

Jonas 4. 12.

Wherefore since the blessed Apostle tells us in the following words of my Text, That *all these things hapned unto them for ensamples*; *and they were* further *written* and delivered down unto posterity *for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*; whose lot it is, as persons *born out of due time*, to wear out a troublesome life in these last and worst [illegible] dayes; Let us, I say, therefore endeavour to grow wise upon

Ver. 11.

upon other perſons coſt. Let us, having taken a ſerious view in private of thoſe ſtupendous Judgments ſhew'd upon thoſe Mutineers; how ſuddenly thoſe malecontents *periſhed and came to a fearful end*, unanimouſly reſolve *Rebellion* to be in truth (according to the Scripture compariſon made thereof) *as the ſin of Witchcraft.* 1 Sam. 15.23.

Let us accoſt thoſe *Sons of men*, who (in the phraſe of the Pſalmiſt) *are ſet on fire:* that reſolvedly continue reſtleſs, as thoſe noxious aſpiring flames, which firſt incenſed them, until they have, like thoſe, conſumed whatſoever is high and great above them: that moſt obſtinately perſevere by their daily practices and nightly Studies, to cauſe unhappy diviſions amongſt us, in the words St. *Paul* does his *fooliſh Galatians*, namely, *who hath bewitched you?* Who, by the Helliſh power of magick Faſcination has ſo far infatuated you, ſo ſtrangely depriv'd you of that natural reaſon you were born into the World with, as to make you ſo erroneouſly prefer *Changes and War*, before *Eſtabliſhment and Peace?* Pſal. 57. 4. Gal. 3. 1. Τίς ἐβάσκανε

In the enſuing Diſcourſe I ſhall endeavour to ſhew:

1. That in theſe later times of Uſurpation, Liberty and Property, Religion and Freedom of Conſcience were moſt unjuſtly taken away from the oppreſſed Inhabitants of theſe three then wretched Kingdoms.

2. That God has been pleaſed in a moſt wonderful manner to reſtore unto us of theſe ravaged.

ged Nations, together with our King, our Liberty and Property, our Religion and Freedom of Conſcience, in the higheſt degree of perfection.

3. That notwithſtanding this, an ungrateful *murmuring* againſt the Government is ſtill the *Engliſh*, as it was then the *Iſraelitiſh* Sin, which cries aloud to Heaven for Vengeance. And then

4. And Laſtly, I ſhall draw a practical Concluſion from the foregoing matter, and ſo diſmiſs you.

I. Of theſe in their order; and Firſt, That in theſe later times of Uſurpation, Liberty and Property, Religion and Freedom of Conſcience were moſt unjuſtly taken away from the oppreſſed Inhabitants of theſe three then wretched Kingdoms.

Silent Leges inter arma. Cic. Orat. pro Milone.

It cannot indeed be denied by any ingenuous perſon, but that (contrary to the *Roman* Obſervation) at the ſame time when the ſhriller ſound of the Trumpet, *the noiſe of Horſes, and the noiſe of a great Hoſt* pierced our Fathers tender ears, *Juſtice*, however, was heard to *utter her ſtill ſmall voice in our Streets*, whilſt (in the words of the *Pſalmiſt*) *the Throne of Iniquity*, which then bore the Soveraign Sway, *framed all their Miſchief by a Law.*

Pſal. 94. 20.

For whoſoever ſhall compare the Tryal of our Bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, before *Pontius Pilate*'s firſt *High Court of Juſtice*, with the Arraignment of our late moſt barbarouſly murdered

dered *King*, before *John Bradſhaw*'s ſecond, ſhall find them to differ no more, than a faithful Copy from its Original.

The blind rage of the Populace, the inſufferable inſolence of the Soldiery, the mock-ſhew of Equity; but eſpecially the notorious Corruption of both their Judges, in condemning two innocent Perſons, in whom they could find no fault; in ſuffering them alike to be deſtroyed only by a pretended Law; nay, and by a further abetting their Deaths by an unknown Law, do make their conditions exactly parallel, and I had almoſt ſaid, alike in Sufferings, alike in Innocence.

But to proceed, As it fared with Him, who *ſate upon the Throne*, even ſo did it fare with him, *that was humbled in Earth and Aſhes*, *Wrath and Envy*, *Trouble and Unquietneſs*, *fear of Death*, *and Anger*, *and Strife* were made the common portion of Truth and Fidelity: Whilſt thoſe partial Determiners of Cauſes (to uſe the Prophets words) *ſmote the great Houſes with Breaches*, *and the little Houſes with Clefts*. The Princes and People, the Potentates and Peaſants, in proportion to their reſpective Eſtates, were equally damnified and oppreſſed. Eccluſ. 40. 3, 5. Amos 6. 11.

Then was the time, when the Loyal Party *having a matter againſt another*, durſt not *go to Law before the Unjuſt*. Then was the Apoſtle's Injunction eaſily obſerved by all good men, *rather to take wrong*, *rather to ſuffer themſelves to be defrauded* by their falſe Brethren, who were for them; 1 Cor. 6. 1, 7.

or

or their traiterous Enemies, who were openly againſt them, than to bring in their legal Defence, and implead them before thoſe Heathen Tribunals. Then, in Short, *was Judgment turned into Wormwood*; then did they *leave off righteouſneſs in the Earth.* Whilſt they exerciſed the moſt tyrannical, high, arbitrary Government over the Lives, Liberties and Properties of the *Engliſh*, *Scotch* and *Iriſh* Nations, ever yet read or heard of amongſt us. Whilſt Volumes will not contain the *Murders*, *Rapines*, *Oppreſſions*, *Sequeſtrations*, *Decimations*, *Impriſonments*, and whatſoever elſe can be thought of, that was cruel, unjuſt, and (as that great *Apoſtle* of thoſe more modern Gentiles words it) *might be taken for an effect of their power, or a cauſe of their pleaſure.*

Hobbs. Leviat. p. 56.

But to leave this Humane Court, and to enter into that Divine one, the Church.

Where, behold, in our Cathedrals (thoſe places of God's ſtanding Worſhip) where we uſed to be moſt religiouſly delighted with the grateful melody, and harmonious noiſe of Praiſes and Thanksgivings unto God, the Fountain and Foundation of all our Bliſs: We then (inſtead thereof) moſt wretchedly heard the contrary baleful Notes, the ill-boding voices of thoſe melancholy Birds mentioned by the Prophet *Iſaiah: The Cormorant and the Bittern, which poſſeſs'd thoſe Places; the Owl alſo and the Raven which alone dwelt in them.*

Iſa. 34. 11.

Pſal. 74. 5, 6.

Thoſe that *lifted up the Axes* before *upon the thick Trees* (the *Pſalmiſt* tells us) were renowned

as

as ſuch, who intended to *bring a thing to an holy perfection:* but, lo! then *they brake down all the carved work of the Sanctuary with Axes and Hammers.*

It pitied us to ſee the Stones of our ruined *Sion* lying in the duſt; it grieved us indeed to behold this *Abomination of Deſolation ſtanding where it ought not.* It afflicted us to view (in the words of *Hoſea*) *the Thorn and the Thiſtle coming up*, flouriſhing and full blown *upon our Altars:* where the Myſtical Body and Blood of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt were uſually beheld, and received with a moſt awful Reverence. Hoſ. 10. 8.

If then our *Emanuel*, our God with us, had vouchſafed to have *bowed the Heavens*, to have come down and viſited that ſtubborn, ſtiff-necked Generation of men, which ſo often in their hypocritical bablings invoked him by the name of Lord, Lord: He would have found a much like, but more unhallowed Reception upon ſuch a ſecond Advent, than he did upon his firſt. For thoſe *Enemies of his Croſs* made even his Father's Houſe become a lively Repreſentation of that crowded Inn, where there was no room; where he ſuffered himſelf, at his Incarnation, to be neceſſitated to make a Stable his conſecrated Temple, and a Manger his Holy of Holies, wherein to lodge his ſhrowded Divinity.

They moſt ſacrilegiouſly made thoſe Church-Lands, dedicated unto God for the maintenance of a religious and learned *Clergy*, to become the *Wages of their Iniquity.* They were then guilty of

Jeroboam's

1 King. 13. 33. *Jeroboam's evil way*, they *made the loweſt of the People Prieſts of the High Places:* whereupon it Mic. 3. 11. naturally followed, that *their Prieſt taught for Hire, and their Prophets divined for Money.*

From thence, we had preached up unto us, for ſound, and (as the Cant then was) Soul-ſaving Doctrine, blaſphemous Socinianiſm, wild Enthuſiaſm, diſguiſed Popery, which gave execrable Indulgences and Abſolutions to men, not to perform their Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, they had ſo often taken: by virtue whereof (as good Chriſtians and Subjects) they and their Poſterity were obliged to bear true Faith and Truſt to their lawful Soveraign; and ſo far as in them lay, to defend that Proteſtant Church and Faith, of which our Royal Martyr died Head and moſt true Defender.

Wherefore, I ſhall chuſe to conclude this firſt Propoſition, with the Remark of a Perſon worthily honoured for his eminent Loyalty and Learning.

Sir Robert Filmer. "We, like the revolting Subjects of *Spain*, "fought againſt our Liege Lord for Taxes and "Religion; and proved alike proſperous Re- "bels: whilſt we, as they, brought home from "the bloody Fields of Battel, the ſame fortunate "Trophies of our Victory; namely more Taxes "than any Nation under the Heavens: and "all the Religions of the World beſides. And ſo, in the ſecond place, I come to ſhew,

II. That God has been pleaſed in a moſt wonderful manner to reſtore unto us of theſe ravaged Nations,

Nations, together with our King, our Liberty and Property, our Religion and Freedom of Conſcience, in the higheſt degree of Perfection.

Our Fathers (like the plagued *Egyptians*, deſcribed in the Book of *Wiſdom*) *were ſhut up in their own Houſes*, and confined by their uſurping Governors from maintaining (the ſweeteſt comfort of Humane Life) Society with their Friends: being made *Priſoners of Darkneſs, fettered with the Bonds of a long Night.* Whilſt they could be permitted on the Week-day to travel but little further than the Jewiſh Sabbath days Journey. But now (praiſed be God) the day is broke, and thoſe black affrighting ſhadows are fled away. The moſt illuſtrious day now ſhines upon us, our Calendars ever yet recorded. A Day at firſt graced by the ſacred light of a Noon-tide Star added to that of the Sun. A Day which the Lord himſelf has made marvellous in our eyes, for the moſt auſpicious Birth and Return of his Gracious Majeſty, *the Breath of our Noſtrils, the Anointed of the Lord.* A Day, that, next to the Nativity of our bleſſed Saviour, ought in all Ages to be ſolemnized with the moſt gratefull Doxologies of *Glory to God in the higheſt*; for ſo miraculouſly ſending *Peace* on this our ſhare of the *Earth:* and ſo graciouſly ſhewing his *good Will towards* us, a loſt, ruined part of Mankind: For ſo mercifully *compaſſing us about with Songs of Deliverance:* For ſo compaſſionately vouchſafing us a ſecond inferior ſort of Redemption from our temporal and ſpiritual Thraldom; a ſecond lower kind of Re-

Wiſd. 17. 2.

See the Act, Anno 1649. Chap. 72.

Lam. 4. 20.

ſtauration unto all our forfeited (through Sin) humane and divine happineſs.

Amos 5. 24. For how does *Judgment now run down as Waters, and Righteouſneſs as a mighty Stream!* Pure and undiſturbed, as that flowing River, which guſhed forth from the twice ſmitten Rock, open-
Num. 20. 11. ed by the divine hand of *Moſes*.

Now the ſincere and upright Judges of our Land impartially render to all, their dues; to *Cæſar* the things that are *Cæſar's*, with an undaunted Loyalty; to God, and his Holy Church, the things that are God's, with pure Religion; to all the King's Subjects the things that belong to them with an even indifferency.

We now again *walk in the Houſe of God as Friends*; which not long ſince had been made a graceleſs *Den of Thieves:* whilſt it was defiled with Horſes, and polluted with thoſe far uncleaner Beaſts, their Riders: who plainly, and without a *Metaphor*, made the *Church of Chriſt* here on
Cant. 6. 4. earth to be truly *Militant, and terrible as an Army with Banners*; forgetting that meekneſs of Wiſdom, which guided our firſt Reformers in ſetling that pure, peaceable, Proteſtant Religion, which this day happily has reſtored to us.

In our Cathedral Service (*whether in the Body,*
2 Cor. 12. 2. *or out of the Body, we cannot tell; being caught up, as it were, with S.* Paul, *to the third Heaven*) we
Rev. 5. 11,13. now joyn with *thoſe ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands* of Angelical miniſtring Spirits, in a full Chorus, to ſing Pſalms and Hymns of *Bleſſing*, and *Honour*, and *Glory*, and

Power unto him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

But to advance yet farther to that moſt *holy ground*, where the *Communion Table* is by publick Authority moſt properly placed: and here no *Proteſtant* Spectator (unleſs *falſly ſo called*) but but muſt from the bottom of his heart acknowledge; that we alone *give unto the Lord the Glory due unto his Name*, and *worſhip the Lord in the* right *beauty of Holineſs*. Whilſt we alike decline the Whoriſh Gawdry of *Babylon*, the Idolatrous Pageantry of the Church of *Rome*, on the one hand; and the ſlovenly, clowniſh, and (in truth) irreverent behaviour of the *Phanatick Diſſenters* on the other. Pſal. 29. 2.

We enjoy the moſt abſolute form of the Hierarchy to be found upon earth: a Monarchical Government of Biſhops in our Church; where our lawful Soveraign (the only true *Vicegerent* of Jeſus Chriſt, that *ſupreme Biſhop of our Souls*) preſides over us in all ſacred ſpiritual matters.

And by the gracious encouragement of this our King, the Churches Royal *nurſing Father*, it comes to paſs; that many of thoſe, who ſerve at her Altars, are the *Sons of Nobles:* moſt of them, at leaſt deſcended from reputable Parentage.

We have publick ſet Forms of Prayer; to the end, that neither Prieſt nor People ſhould be *raſh with their mouths*, or let their hearts be haſty to utter any unpremeditated thing before God. The modeſt Compilers of our Liturgy having minded us, that God is in Heaven, and Omniſcient; vain

Man upon Earth, and born ignorant of the ways of the Lord, and *unskilful in the word of Righteouſneſs*; and therefore prudently direct us to *let our words be few* and choſen.

It is our Church alone, which holds no pious Frauds, maintains no holy Cheats. It is ſhe alone that can defie all the ſtudied wit and malice of her Adverſaries, to ſhew any political Article or Canon of her Eſtabliſhment, whereby it may be proved that any of her true Sons can cry out Act. 19. 25, 28. (with *Demetrius*) and ſay, *Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our Wealth*; therefore, *Great is* Diana *of the* Epheſians.

No, it is only her Teachers, when they inſtruct their reſpective Congregations, who cannot be perſuaded to *ſuppoſe that Gain is Godlineſs:* but with an ardent Zeal demonſtrate, that they ſeek not theirs, but them; that they covet not their Poſſeſſions, but their Salvation.

She obliges her Proſelites to ſtand to no Principles, but thoſe which in expreſs words are manifeſt in the Scriptures; or elſe by undeniable conſequence may be deduced thence. The unfained meaning of which Texts, ſhe moſt candidly refers to thoſe impartial Commentators, thoſe greateſt Lovers and moſt competent Judges of the Divine Truth; namely, the uncorrupted Councils, and genuine Works of thoſe ancient Fathers, who came neareſt our Bleſſed Saviour (the firſt *Author*, and laſt *Finiſher of our Faith*) as well in Holineſs as time.

She

She moſt indulgently, and like a true Mother, obliges her Children to the performance of no Duty, which has not the power of God's Law in the firſt place, and of the King's Law in the ſecond; a Divine as well as Humane Sanction, to enforce the practice thereof.

Her Diſcipline, in ſhort, is moſt ſincerely Primitive, and her Doctrine moſt truly Apoſtolical. 'Tis ſhe alone that compleatly anſwers the deſcription made in the *Canticles* of the Spouſe of Chriſt, *She is all fair, there is no ſpot in her.* Cant. 4. 7.

Thus hath God been pleaſed to look upon his people; and magnifie his Mercy in reſtoring to us our Prince, and together with him, our Religion, Laws and Liberties, to our unſpeakable preſent and future Comfort. A happineſs, that, before we enjoy'd it, was almoſt above our *Faith* as well as *Sight:* and therefore, now we do enjoy it, ſhould be commemorated with a moſt exalted thankfulneſs. For now has the *Lord given us Reſt from our Sorrows, and from our Fears, and from the hard Bondage wherein we were made to ſerve.* Iſa. 14. 3.

This is that we ſhould all learn to do, *to praiſe the Lord for his Goodneſs, and for his wonderful Works to the Children of Men:* learn to *fear God* firſt, and then *honour his Anointed*, who *draws us* to Obedience no otherwiſe than *with the Cords of a Man, and with the Bands of Love.* Pſal. 107. 8. Hoſ. 11. 4.

But though our Duty be ſo eaſie, as that Liberty ſhall be the purchaſe of our Obedience; and (as the Orator ſays) in being ſubject to the Laws, *Legum idcirco omnes ſervi ſumus, ut liberi eſſe poſſimus.* Cic. Orat. pro A. Cluentio.

Laws, we ſhall find the greateſt freedom; yet will not many amongſt us be perſuaded hereunto: but on the contrary, diſturb the Peace and Quiet of theſe Nations, by their endleſs Jealouſies and *Murmurings*, Which brings me to the third Propoſition; namely,

III. That notwithſtanding the miſery we were in, and the happineſs we are reſtored to, an ungrateful *Murmuring* againſt the Government is ſtill the *Engliſh*, as it was then the *Iſraelitiſh* Sin, which cries aloud to Heaven for Vengeance.

The *Engliſh Man* will anſwer his opprobrious, but too ſadly true Character; that *he never knows when he is well.* Then only will he make a true eſtimate of his happineſs, when it is too late; when, for his high Ingratitude towards his Divine and Humane Donors, he moſt juſtly becomes deprived thereof.

He is born with an innate ſullen Principle of Diſcontent, which directly interferes with that inward Quiet, that ſedate Serenity of Mind, which alone is able to yield that true Peace and Satisfaction, which all *the Affluence*, which all *the good things of this World* beſides cannot afford.

Yea, he will continue like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt: He will, like thoſe diſturbed Waters, be *caſting up Mire and Dirt:* He will, like thoſe *raging Waves*, be evermore *foaming out his own ſhame*, by *deſpiſing Dominion, and ſpeaking Evil of Dignities.* He will not ceaſe bringing *falſe railing Accuſations* againſt the eſtabliſhed Government under which he lives; until he has

has effectually made his *Teeth* to prove *Spears and Arrows, and his Tongue a ſharp Sword*, wherewith to deſtroy his lawful Soveraign, and Fellow-Subjects.

For, whence elſe have proceeded thoſe two late equally deteſtable Helliſh Plots, of the Jeſuits, and Jeſuited Proteſtants; of *Simeon* and *Levi, who are Brethren*, who have the ſame *Inſtruments of Cruelty in both their Habitations?*

From whence elſe have aroſe thoſe contumelious Reproaches, whereby the *blaſphemous Rabſhakehs* of our Age, with the peſtilential Breath of their Mouths, have in vain endeavoured to blaſt the verdant flouriſhing honour of the moſt juſt Bench, and moſt Orthodox Pulpit, this Nation could perhaps ever yet in any Age glory of?

But the *Engliſh Men* will prove themſelves *Hebrews of the Hebrews*; deſcended, as it were, on both ſides from thoſe murmuring *Iſraelites* my Text relates to.

For how do they remember their paſt *Affliction and Miſery?* the *Wormwood and Gall, they ſo lately fed upon?* Why, moſt truly like that unthankful people, they have their *Souls dried away*, becauſe they have nothing elſe but this *Manna*, this Angels Food before their Eyes to nouriſh them. Lam. 3. 19. Num. 11. 6.

For otherwiſe how comes it to paſs, That they will *forſake the* true *Fountain of living Waters*, the Church of *England*, which not long ſince their Souls ſeemed to *pant after*; and perverſly *hew them out Ciſterns, broken Ciſterns, that can hold no Water*, unleſs corrupted and poyſoned. What

What other Reaſon can be aſſigned, That when the Fathers of our time are asked by their Children for the *Bread of Life*, they will give them (but at beſt) *an inſipid Stone*, in which there is no delight or nouriſhment, either to Body or Soul; That when they *ask for a Fiſh*, they (contrary to our Saviour's Remark) give them *a Serpent:* and when *an Egg*, *a Scorpion?* When, as *new born Babes*, *they deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word*, they ſend them in their tender years, to ſuck in thoſe deadly envenom'd Principles, that are but too commonly prated up in Conventicles; thoſe Seminaries of *Murmuring*, and Nurſeries of Rebellion? And when they deſire the *ſtrong Meat* of the Goſpel, *that they may grow thereby unto perfect Men*, *unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt*; they (inſtead thereof) actually engage their unſtable minds in *Leagues*, *Covenants* and *Aſſociations* againſt the King's ſacred Perſon, his ſerene and happy Government.

Theſe are the miſchievous methods theſe Men take to beguile unwary Souls; theſe the accurſed Theorems they lay down to their Proſelites. But whenever they put them in practice, they will (without a ſpeedy Repentance, and God's great Mercy) moſt aſſuredly find Miſery and Deſtruction to be the Reward of their Unrighteouſneſs. For though they may chance to eſcape the ſtroak of Juſtice here, yet, *Behold*, *the Lord cometh* (ſaith St. *Jude*) *with ten thouſands of his Saints*, *to execute Judgment upon all* ſuch as are *Murmurers*, *Complainers*, *walking after their own Luſts*, *and whoſe mouth*

Jud. v. 14, 15, 16.

mouth ſpeaketh great ſwelling words, having mens perſons in admiration becauſe of advantage. But, Fourthly, and laſtly,

I ſhall now draw a practical Concluſion from the foregoing Matter, and ſo diſmiſs you.

It is my wiſh, and I ſhall make it my endeavour, to end like a true *Samaritan*; and pour in healing Oyl and Wine: to do my little part in binding up thoſe green Wounds, under which ſome part of our miſerable Nation moſt wilfully at preſent languiſhes. IV.

Our bleſſed Saviour, although Truth it ſelf in the Abſtract, when he found he could not gain Belief to his Doctrine amongſt the hardned Scribes and Phariſees; condeſcended ſo low as to refer them unto *Moſes* and the Prophets: and tells them, they were they which teſtified of him. St. *Paul* condeſcended yet lower; when he diſputed with his Heathen Auditors, whilſt he only refers them unto their own Poets, to find a Confirmation of his Arguments.

Aratus. Menander. Epimenides.

But I will ſtoop to the loweſt method of Reaſoning: whilſt I ſhall only refer thoſe turbulent Spirits, who refuſe to be convinced from the Holy Bible, the Oracles of God, that they ought to poſſeſs their Souls, not only in patience, but in thankfulneſs too, to an impartial peruſal of thoſe brief *Weekly Memoirs*, which are Authentick Abridgments of our preſent Modern Hiſtory. And then I dare challenge the boldeſt of them to deny if they can,

That God has not in a moſt gracious manner been pleaſed to appear to us of theſe Fortunate Iſlands, under his kinder Titles, *The God of Peace and of Order:* whilſt at the ſame time he has been known to all the Nations round about us, as well Chriſtian as Infidel, under his more terrible Names of *The Lord of Hoſts, The God of Forces, The Lord ſtrong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in Battel.*

That whilſt we have been *breaking our Swords into Plough-ſhares, and our Spears into Pruning Hooks:* whilſt We have been making thoſe Inſtruments of death, ſerviceable towards bringing forth the Fruits of the Earth; our Neighbours have not in a moſt hoſtile manner been turning them upon each others Breaſts, even *till their Blood has been poured out as the Duſt, and their Fleſh as the Dung.*

Whilſt we have ſecurely *eaten every Man of his own Vine, and every one of his Fig-tree; and drank every one the Waters of his own Ciſtern:* They have (on the contrary) *ſowed, but not reaped; and trod the Olives, but have not anointed themſelves with Oil; and preſſed thoſe Grapes which make the ſweet Wine, but have not drank Wine.* Mic. 6. 15.

Whilſt We enjoy the quiet poſſeſſion of our Eſtates in our own times, and probably may leave them ſo to our Poſterity after us; They have had their Enemies *without number encamped againſt them, to deſtroy the Increaſe of the Earth: And Armies as Graſhoppers for Multitude entring into their Land to devour it.* So that *Strangers have*

been

been filled with their Wealth, and their Labours have been in the Houſes of Strangers.

Whilſt God has been pleaſed mercifully to *crown our Years with his Goodneſs*, and to cauſe the *Clouds* continually to *drop down Fatneſs*; yea, to drop even upon the barren Dwellings of the Wilderneſs. Whilſt our *Hills have rejoyced on every ſide, our Paſtures have been cloathed with Flocks, and our Valleys covered over with Corn:* Their Fields have been turned into *Aceldama's*, made fertile only by the flowing Streams of Humane Blood; and no other Voice heard therein, but the diſmal howlings, and ſorrowful Groans of the moſt miſerably expiring Slaughtered.

Whilſt we have been *cloathed in ſoft Raiment, and been gorgeouſly appparelled*; whilſt we *have lived delicately*, and been pampered with all the various parts of Luxury: Their Fields have been covered with *dead Corps*, their *Garments rolled in Blood:* and thoſe Bodies that ſurviv'd the common Miſery, have been expoſed to the ſcorching heat of the Sun by day, and the chill benumming Cold of the Moon by night. So that though they were invulnerable, by all the Weapons formed againſt them in this cruel Warfare; yet have they not been Armour-proof againſt thoſe keener Arrows of Exile, Famine and Deſpair.

Whilſt our moſt gracious *Moſes wears himſelf away* with anxious Cares how to procure all Welfare to his bounden Subjects; and, as if he were

not by a figure, but in a literal ſenſe, the *Father*
Num. 11.12. *of his Countrey, carries us in his Boſom, as a nurſing Father beareth the ſucking Child:* Whilſt He ſeems to be wrought upon only by the Στοργὴ, by his Natural Affection; and like an *indulgent Parent*, thinks *his Children ought not to lay up for him, but he for his Children:* Whilſt (I ſay) he has of late exempted us from paying the moſt cuſtomary Taxes uſually granted him over and above his Annual ſtanding Revenue, the moſt neceſſary ſupport of his Crown and Dignity. Our Neighbours all the while have moſt arbitrarily been forced to raiſe almoſt infinite Sums of Contribution Money, for the Maintenance of their Uſurping Tyrants; and ſo brought upon themſelves and their Poſterity, in good ſad earneſt (what our late *Murmurers* vainly but ſuſpected) perpetual Slavery.

Whilſt We enjoy the free Exerciſe of a moſt pure and undefiled Religion; whilſt our Mother, the Church, is permitted (without any interruption) freely to receive her Sons and Daughters into her Arms, and to *gather her Children as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings*; (though many of them are ſo rebellious as to deſpiſe ſo tender a Propoſal; and rather chuſe to expoſe themſelves to thoſe ravenous Birds of Prey, her Adverſaries:) The People round about us are ſent *to ſing the Songs of the Lord in a ſtrange Land*; and have no other Rule left them to walk by, but that hard one to Fleſh and Blood; namely,
Mat. 10.28. *When they are perſecuted in one City, to fly unto another.*

ther. Nay, and in thoſe places, where the true Religion is not yet wholly extirpated, the Profeſſors of it are in perpetual danger, even whilſt they are performing her moſt holy Rites, to be themſelves offered up as *Holocauſts*; and with the ſurpriſed *Galileans*, *to have their Blood mingled with their Sacrifices.* Luk. 13. 1.

Whilſt we have been particularly privileged with calm *Halcyon* days; whilſt we have been in a moſt peculiar manner bleſſed with the Genuine Fruits of the Dove-like Spirit; to wit, *Love, Joy,* Gal. 5. 22. *Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, and Goodneſs:* On the other ſide, *Snares, Fire and Brimſtone,* Pſal. 11. 17. *Storm and Tempeſt* have been the diſ-reliſhing *Portion of their Cup.* And may the over-ruling Providence of God moſt graciouſly forbid their being forced ever *to wring out the dregs thereof, and drink them.* For that, at preſent, *within are Fears*, although *without there are* not actual *Fightings* amongſt them. They are troubled with Formidable *Rumours of Wars*, and have but too great reaſon to fear their ſpeedy breaking out into open Hoſtility. Their only ſad hopes, alas! are, that, though the thing *revealed be true, yet the time appointed may be long.*

Thus has God viſited others *with Judgment*, and us *with Mercy.* And We truſt, that as he has lately in an eminent manner, ſo he will ſtill vouchſafe to *abate the pride, aſſwage the malice, and confound the devices of our Enemies*, of whatſoever Party or Perſuaſion. Our Souls having eſcaped, even as caught Birds, out of the Snare of their entrapping

entrapping Fowlers: The Snares having been in a miraculous manner broken, and thereby a moſt ſignal Deliverance wrought for us.

And now that God (the Almighty Governor of the World) hath done theſe great things for us, beyond what he has done for other Nations, it ſhould engage Us to a moſt hearty Thankfulneſs for the ſame. *Let us therefore offer the Sacrifice of Praiſe to God continually, that is, the Fruit of our Lips, giving thanks to his Name.* This would ſilence all our Complaints, quiet our *Murmurings*, and drive away our Fears; eſpecially now we are ſo throughly convinced by plain demonſtration, that the Lord is on our ſide, he taketh our part, and fighteth for us.

Heb. 13. 15.

Away then with groundleſs Jealouſies, and imaginary Fears! When God is our *Helper*, our *Defence*, even a *Tower of Strength* to his Servants againſt all their Enemies. Shall we ſtill diſ-believe all theſe happy ſigns of his Love, he has ſhewed among us? Shall we (out of Mockery to his Almighty Power) create to our ſelves, out of nothing, unreaſonable Diſcontents and *Murmurings?* This is (like *Envy* it ſelf) for us to weep, becauſe we can ſee nothing juſtly deplorable: To draw up the Sluces, and open the Flud-gates of our Tears; becauſe we can meet with no true reaſon of *Complaining in our Streets.* Let us then no longer nauſeate, and ungratefully ſurfeit upon our laſting Proſperity; and, like *Polycrates*, wilfully fling our Rings into the River, that according to the blind Dictates of Humane Nature (which incline

tenet
Vixque lacrymas, quia nil lacrymabile cernit.
Ovid. Met. l. 2.

cline us to love Variety) we, with him, may obtain an unſavoury taſte of Adverſity. Let us no more provoke the Lord by a fooliſh Longing after Change and Novelty: but reſolve to be contented with that Lot and Portion, his merciful Providence hath aſſigned to us: Ever humbly acknowledging his multiplied Mercy, and his peculiar Care over us; a Nation, even like *Iſrael* it ſelf, for whom the Lord has *wrought Marvels, ſuch as have not been done in all the Earth.* A Nation, *ſaved by the Lord, the Shield of our Help, and the Sword of our Excellency.* Exod. 34. 10. Deut. 33. 29.

FINIS.